

SUSAN HUTTON

Is More Than

The beautiful folded fish nets, the bleached floats,
the rustic ropes and anchors strewn along the shore
belie their heartless presence in the sea. Meanwhile,

the fish have made a heaven of the air. They rise from their cold nights
toward the multiplying dawn. The colors are marvelous, splendid.
It's unfair when they're caught. The escapists: confirmed liars.

The rest: it ends badly, but it simplifies things. The idea of heaven
was once all that mattered: whole and perfect, beyond complaint.
And in the seven such days I spent in a small French village,

knives and forks clattered at me from other windows when I ate.
When the church bells rang in the morning we were all yanked from sleep.
I lived easily in their habits but my world was fresh. After a thousand

breakfasts together, the table *is* more than a table, just as the grass is more
than the grass. The color, for one thing, and the smell. The blades
hide beetles and crickets and march out silently to the street.